

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 14 JUNE 2022

**COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,
LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Abdul Wahid (Chair)
Councillor Iqbal Hossain
Councillor Suluk Ahmed
Councillor James King
Councillor Amin Rahman (Substitute for Councillor Kamrul Hussain)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar (Substitute for Councillor Amina Ali)

Other Councillors Present:

None

Officers Present:

Paul Buckenham	– (Head of Development Management, Planning and Building Control, Place)
Kirsty Gilmer	– (Planning and Building Control, Place)
Gareth Gwynne	– (Area Planning Manager (West), Planning and Building Control, Place)
Siddhartha Jha	– (Principal Planning Lawyer, Legal Services, Governance)
Enoch Ng	– (Planning Officer, Planning and Building Control, Place)
Zoe Folley	– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Chief Executive's Office)

Apologies:

Councillor Kamrul Hussain
Councillor Amina Ali
Councillor Amy Lee

1. ELECTION OF VICE - CHAIR FOR THE COMMITTEE FOR 2022-23

It was proposed by Councillor Amin Rahman, seconded by Councillor Suluk Ahmed and **RESOLVED:**

1. That Councillor Kamrul Hussain be appointed Vice-Chair of the Development Committee for the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS**

Councillor Amin Rahman declared that he had recently attended a meeting on the main item 7.1 attended by Collingwood Estate residents. He stated that he could consider the application with an open mind.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

The Committee **RESOLVED**

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Development Committee held on 21st March 2022 be agreed and signed by the Chair.

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROCEDURE FOR HEARING OBJECTIONS AND MEETING GUIDANCE**

The Committee **RESOLVED** that:

1. The procedure for hearing objections and meeting guidance be noted.
2. In the event of changes being made to recommendations by the Committee, the task of formalising the wording of those changes be delegated to the Corporate Director, Place along the broad lines indicated at the meeting; and
3. In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Corporate Director, Place be delegated authority to do so, provided always that the Corporate Director does not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision

5. **DEFERRED ITEMS**

There were none

6. **DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, QUORUM, MEMBERSHIP AND DATES OF MEETINGS**

RESOLVED

1. To note the Development Committee's Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of future meetings as set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

7. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DECISION

7.1 Garages to the West of Donegal House, Buckhurst Street, London (PA/22/00250)

Update report was tabled.

Paul Buckenham introduced the report for the demolition of existing garages and the construction of six new, 2 and 3 storey, 4-bed terraced town houses with landscaped front and rear gardens and inset roof terraces. He also advised of the matters set out in the update report including a proposed additional condition. He also advised of a minor change to a submitted drawing.

Enoch Ng presented the application, highlighting the following issues:

- Provided an overview of the site and surrounding area.
- Details of the application's key features including: key benefits, the impact on trees and the proposed replanting of trees. The proposals would provide six high quality affordable rented homes, with three let as London Affordable Rent and the other three as Tower Hamlets Living Rent.
- Outcome of the statutory consultation - 36 letters of representation were received (of which 13 letters without full address) including an objection letter from the Collingwood Tenants & Residents Association. 1 petition of objection was also received with 42 signatures (of which 9 individuals have already submitted). The concerns raised related to a number of issues around: loss of the garages, design and amenity issues, parking issues, and the relocation of waste bins.
- The proposed land use complied with policy given – given there was no policy requirement to replace the existing car parking spaces or the hardstanding area. Highways Services had reviewed the application and had raised no concerns. They were of the view that there is sufficient capacity on the surrounding streets to cater for any potential overspill parking within the existing CPZ. The Council were also aware that a number were being used for storage. Instead of this, the site could be utilised to provide much needed affordable housing.
- The merits of the design approach. The scheme had been carefully designed to prevent direct overlooking and protect privacy given the design features, including a privacy screen. These were noted.
- Regarding the sunlight and daylight impacts, it was confirmed that neighbouring properties would be affected, as detailed in the report, including 16 ground floor windows at Donegal House. On balance the properties would retain good levels of sunlight and daylight. Overall, it was felt that the impacts were acceptable given the provision of the affordable houses.
- The waste and recycling plans. It was noted that, alongside the provision of facilities for the new homes, it was proposed to upgrade the communal bin storage for Donegal House.

- The Environment issues. Environmental Health had raised no objections and conditions will be secured to address any issues and maximise biodiversity benefits

Officers were recommending that the planning permission is granted.

The Chair invited the registered speakers to address the meeting.

Iain Lawson (Collingwood Tenants and Residents Association) and Aysha Khatun, local resident, addressed the Committee. They expressed concerns regarding:

- Lack of consultation with residents at the pre – application stage by the applicant, including tenants of the garages.
- No thought to the needs of residents especially in regard to the impact on their health and wellbeing, particularly during construction stage.
- Impact on residential amenity in terms of daylight, sunlighting impacts, privacy, sense of enclosure.
- Increased anti - social behaviour (ASB), which was already a problem.
- Large number of objections.
- Overdevelopment of site given number of new properties also being built near site, including infill developments.
- Infrastructure impact.
- Loss of garages and parking spaces.
- Need for the storage space (in the garages).
- Previous scheme involving loss of garages had been rejected.

Peter Elia, Anwar Punekar and Alice Brownfield addressed the Committee in support. They advised that:

- The scheme would deliver much needed affordable housing on a suitable site, alongside opportunities to improve the site and design out crime.
- Should help prevent ASB given inclusion of passive security measures.
- That the applicant was aware of the concerns about the lack of pre – application consultation. This was due to a number of reasons which were highlighted, relating to small size of scheme – need to prioritise time sensitive grant funded schemes, the impact of Covid.
- The development had been arranged in such a way to protect privacy. (in terms of the massing and the approach to varying building heights and position of windows, for example)
- It would provide generous levels of amenity space, which exceeded London Plan requirements.

The Committee then asked questions of the registered speakers and officers in relation to the following points:

- The concerns around the lack of pre – application consultation. The applicant's team reported in further detail the reasons for this.

- The objectors clarified their concerns about the lack of consultation with the TRA. They also highlighted their overall concerns about the application and the scale of objections to the previous proposals involving the loss of garages.
- Officers noted that the Council had carried out consultation in line with the statutory consultation requirements. The lack of pre – application consultation by the applicant was not a material planning issue.
- It was further explained that the scheme had been carefully designed (in terms of the approach to breaking up the massing and varying building heights) to minimise impacts on neighbouring properties. It was considered that it would make a positive contribution to the area.
- The proximity of the development to nearby properties. The applicant clarified the distances between the development and neighbouring properties and the window to window relationships. It was noted that the closet property would be approximately 2 metres away from the boundary (which was similar to that of the garages), but with measures to protect prevent overlooking. The new homes would have a height of 8.5 metres at their highest and would drop down at certain points, in contrast to the garages. Overall, there would be adequate separation distances between windows and they broadly complied with policy. Officers also highlighting the gaps between the proposed houses at various points.
- Sunlight and daylight assessment. The applicant's team provided further details of the assessment particularly in terms of the moderate/ adverse impacts at Donegal House. Many of the windows most affected were secondary recessed windows, and received only a limited amount of light at present due to existing constraints. Overall these properties would experience very level little difference in terms of daylight distribution. The retained levels of daylight will remain good, with good levels of BRE compliance.
- Regarding the re-provided bin storage area, the applicant stated that the existing storage facility was not fit for purpose. A waste management strategy would be secured by condition.
- The development would be car free. The scheme would be subject to the application of the Council's parking permit scheme. The applicant also confirmed that the impact from the loss of garages and on parking had been fully assessed and the proposals were considered to be acceptable in view of the assessment.
- The objectors also commented on the use of these garages. It was noted that some may be used for storage and also for parking vehicles. There were concerns about: parking pressures from the displaced cars and also new cars from the development. Concerns were also expressed about a greater walking distance for residents, particular those with special needs to parking paces. There were also concerns about loss of storage space and this leading to overcrowding.

On a vote of 5 favour, 0 against and 1 abstention, the Committee **RESOLVED:**

1. That planning permission is GRANTED at Garages to the West of Donegal House, Buckhurst Street, London for the following development
 - Demolition of existing garages and the construction of six new, 2 and 3 storey, 4-bed terraced town houses with landscaped front and rear gardens and inset roof terraces. (PA/22/00250)
2. Subject to conditions set out in the Committee report and the update report.

Officers also undertook to amend the conditions to secure details of the waste strategy at the pre -commencement stage.

8. OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

None

The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Abdul Wahid
Development Committee